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the Co-op Spirit

people helping
people with
personal technology

a publication of
TechAlliance™
...a computer cooperative

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THE CO-OP SPIRIT is the monthly newsletter of TechAlliance, a non-profit computer cooperative committed to providing members with resources that increase the understanding and enjoyment of personal computers. The co-op provides members with user groups for the Amiga, Apple // Family, Macintosh, and MS-DOS machines. Both beginning and advanced assistance are provided at our various Special Interest Group Meetings. The Kent, Washington office is presently being set up as a resource center for our local members. Members can peruse the software and book library. This newsletter is our official organ and is sent to every member. It consists mostly of contributions from the membership which include industry news, machine-specific articles, and other items of interest.

MEMBERSHIPS: TechAlliance Memberships may be obtained by filling out the form on the back cover of this newsletter and mailing it, along with your dues, to TechAlliance. Annual Membership dues are $25.00 per year; $35 per year outside the U.S.

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SUBMISSION DEADLINES: The deadline for articles, news, and meeting announcements will be the 1st of the prior month. All articles must be submitted on a 3½"disk in ASCII text format with hardcopy included *(this is the preferred method)*, or articles may also be uploaded in ASCII text format to the TechAlliance BBS with hardcopy submitted by mail. TechAlliance reserves the right to review, edit, delete or accept articles at its discretion.

MEETING SCHEDULE: Please see last pages of newsletter for meeting schedules and times.

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The TechAlliance BBS

With over 1,000 validated users, the TechAlliance BBS is one of our fastest growing services. Users find valuable technical material on this BBS, including discussions of basic and technical programming problems, viruses, and select postings from other online sources such as USENET.

The board's download libraries contain technical notes, sample code, and a collection of the usual fonts, utilities, stacks, etc.

Many of our current users are familiar with several computer environments; so crossover questions get good attention. And where possible, communication across computer types is encouraged. For example, the graphics library is largely in GIF format.

To sign on, simply call 206-251-0543. Our system uses standard modem parameters, 300-1200-2400 baud, 8 bit, no parity, one stop bit. We have three phone lines with automatic roll-over connection to the next available line. ▲

CALL FOR ARTICLES

TechAlliance is your co-op, and it takes member participation to make things happen. If you are a local member, take the time to attend local meetings, volunteer to help or do a demonstration or a review of hardware or software. If you are not in the Seattle area, become a consultant or if you have something you think would be helpful or of interest to other members submit your thoughts and articles to the Co-op Spirit at our regular address, care of the Co-op Spirit Editor. Letters to the Editor are also welcome. But don't forget to include both printed and disk copies of all submissions in ASCII format on a 3½" disk. Disks will not be returned to the author, so be sure to make an extra copy for yourself.

Remember... your contributions and efforts will make TechAlliance a valuable resource to all members! ▲

Editor's Notes

We will soon begin a regular program of mailing out renewal notices. We will be sending you a membership renewal and questionnaire.

Please realize that this newsletter is a very important first step in the re-building of our co-op. The board of directors is anxious to hear your input. Become active – write us and let us know what services we should offer; submit some news or information to the newsletter; participate in the member-to-member consulting network. Your active participation will make TechAlliance a vital organization.

The following articles have been contributed by members. We look forward to your continued support of ***The Co-op Spirit*** for future issues. And as editor, I want to personally thank every contributor. Without your time and efforts, this second issue would not have been published! ***THANKS!*** ▲

New Modem User Blues

Or... Why ain't this BBS working right?

By Paul Stout, TechAlliance SYSOP

(Editor's Note: This article was designed for the new BBS user to read while on-line using the TechAlliance BBS. It will walk you through the process.)

YOU KNOW, most of us who have been using modems for any extensive period of time and are active in calling Bulletin boards tend to forget how confusing things can be for a newcomer to modeming.

One thing various brands of BBS software have in common is some rather cryptic terms, error message, definitions, etc. And TBBS is no exception!

So, for you new users out there, I'm going to give you a walk through on calling the TechAlliance BBS for the first time. Ok, you've dialed 251-0543 and you've made your first ever connection to a BBS.

What are you going to see? In our case you will see some lines of text about the system and the beginning of the all important "log-on" screen.

The first question asks for your first and last name. This is more important than it sounds as you MUST enter your name exactly the same way each time you call. You, as caller "New User" will see this on the screen:

```
FIRST NAME? NEW
LAST NAME? USER
```

Once you've entered your name, the user list will be searched as in:

```
SEARCHING USER FILE
```

And not finding you as a current user you are asked the following question:

```
CALLING FROM (CITY,STATE)? KENT, WA
```

Once your answer this question you are shown the following:

```
TBBS WELCOMES NEW USER
CALLING FROM KENT, WA
IS THIS CORRECT? Y
```

If you've made a goof, this is your chance to go back and re-enter your name and location all over again. Sounds sort of dumb to point out something obvious like your name and where you live, but I stress it because our BBS, like many others, will drop you from the user list if these questions are answered incorrectly. Don't laugh, it happens a lot!

But, on to the serious stuff, and the area where most of the mistakes are made. Just about all the calls and messages I get from users who are having problems logging on to the BBS relate to setting up terminal display characteristics. You need to tell the BBS software about how your computer system and terminal software work. Unfortunately none of the following steps have a default value you can use, so you must enter the correct information. Also unfortunately the wording for some of these questions could have been better.

The next question you see asks how wide is your screen display. Unless you have an unusual setup the correct answer here should be "80" and will look like this:

```
# CHARS PER LINE ON SCREEN(10-132)? 80
```

Now we need to define your terminal setup. This has to do with things like how the video screen is cleared. Stuff that you would generally never think about.

You will be shown something similar to the following set of terminal configuration choices:

```
<A>IBM PC ANSI <B>VT-52 <C>VT-100
<D>APPLE II <E>VIDTEX <F>TRS-80 1/3
<G>ANSI BBS <H>ATARI <I>H19/H89/Z19
<J>IBM PC <K>TELEVID 925 <L>ADM-3
<M>AMIGA
ENTER LETTER OF YOUR TERMINAL, <CR>
IF NOT LISTED:
```

Whatever you do, if you are not very familiar with terminal displays and/or terminal software, DO NOT, as the following line suggests: Enter letter of your terminal, <CR>. If not listed: press return (or <CR>).

It is very easy to make a mistake here. If you don't see your specific computer or terminal listed here you should choose "B" or "C" as a default terminal configuration. Just about every terminal software program that I'm aware of supports VT-100 or VT-52 terminal emulation. Just make sure that

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Stop! Stop right now and check the expiration date on your mailing label. (It's on the back of this booklet.) If your expiration date is February 1991 or earlier, you have two potential problems. First of all, this could be the last all-member newsletter you will receive. Second, you may not be able to vote or run for office in the March election. We won't even mention the fact that you might not be able to download from the TBBS.

Stop feeling left out. All does not have to be lost. There is a handy TechAlliance Application/Renewal form on the back of this booklet. Photocopy it. Fill it out. Mail it in with your renewal fee – $25 for U.S. residents or $35 for international memberships.

Stop thinking you'll do this later. You don't want to miss an issue of this newsletter. Call if you wish (206/251-5222) from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (PST).

Go! Now that you have taken care of your TechAlliance renewal, you can enjoy the rest of this newsletter and think about what you might like to write for an upcoming issue. Enjoy! ▲

NEW MODEM BLUES...

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you also set your terminal software to the same setting.

Ok, what if you do press return or somehow press return when you see: "Enter letter of your terminal, <CR> if not listed:"

Well, not all is lost. You will be in the Terminal Definition Setup and you will see the following set of questions:

```
CAN YOUR TERMINAL PRINT LOWER CASE? Y
DOES YOUR TERMINAL NEED LINE FEEDS? Y
HOW MANY NULLS (0-50, NORMALLY 0)? 0
CAN YOUR TERMINAL DISPLAY ANSI CODES? N
CAN YOUR TERMINAL DISPLAY IBM GRAPHICS
CHARACTERS? N
DO YOU WISH TO HAVE A PAUSE AFTER EACH
DISPLAY PAGE (Y/N)? Y
HOW MANY LINES PER DISPLAY PAGE
(10-80)? 24
```

Just answer the questions exactly as shown in the above example. These settings will work with just about any computer setup. Maybe not 100% perfectly, but you will at least have text displayed and be able to read what is going on. Answer some of these incorrectly and the odds are you are not going to be able to tell what in the heck is going on. You may see some funny characters on the screen but it will be readable. I want to stress one thing! When asked the second question about line feeds, enter "Yes". A "No" here will most likely screw up things. This question about line feeds probably causes more trouble than anything else during new user logons!

Once you set your terminal display configuration you are shown something similar to the following:

```
TERMINAL PROFILE SET TO:
ANSI CODES ALLOWED
IBM GRAPHICS ALLOWED
UPPER/LOWER CASE
LINE FEEDS NEEDED
0 NULLS AFTER EACH <CR>
DO YOU WISH TO MODIFY THIS? N
```

In just about every case I can think of the correct answer here is "No". Unless something has drastically gone wrong here, you don't need to modify anything! Answering "Yes" here and a wrong keystroke in reply to questions you will then be asked could easily lead to your not being able to read what is going on. But if you do answer "Yes" you will end up at the Terminal Definition Setup. Just use the default examples given above for Terminal Definition to answer the questions and everything will work.

Getting close to the end here...

These next two questions make life liveable for those of us who aren't world champion speed readers! Just about any video display made today has a 24 or 25 line text display. I highly recommend that you use the following defaults for the two following questions:

```
DO YOU WISH TO HAVE A PAUSE AFTER
EACH DISPLAY PAGE (Y/N)? Y
HOW MANY LINES PER DISPLAY PAGE
(10-80)? 24
```

This will allow you to read menu's and messages at your pace. Answering "No" to having a pause means that the only time the text will stop scrolling off the screen is when the BBS is expecting a keypress from you. Generally I recommend that those with 24 line screens set the lines per display to 23 and those with 25 line displays to 24.

And lastly, your password. You will see the following:

```
PLEASE ENTER A 1-8 CHARACTER
PASSWORD TO BE USED FOR FUTURE
LOGONS.
```

This password may have any printable characters you wish. Lower case is considered different from upper case and imbedded blanks are legal. REMEMBER THIS PASSWORD. You need it to log on.

```
YOUR PASSWORD? NEWUSER
```

I want to stress the point about Lower Case and Blanks being significant. And even more importantly, WRITE YOUR PASSWORD DOWN. Entering your password wrong on subsequent calls will stop you from being logged onto the BBS.

Logon security is a combination of your Name and your Password. If you enter your name differently than you did at the time of your first call, you can still get on the system. Albeit you will be considered a new user again and have to answer the questions all over again. But enter your password wrong and you won't be allowed to logon. You get three tries at entering your name and password. After the third try the BBS will disconnect you. So write this stuff down and keep it handy.

One last thing..... How do I get verified? All callers can verify themselves while online. TechAlliance members will be automatically given members status after they have filled out the members questionnaire. Once you've answered the boring technical stuff you are going to end up at the Main Menu. All new and unverified users on their first and every subsequent call will see the following as part of the Main Menu:

```
UNVALIDATED USERS: <V>ALIDATION
REQUEST. NEEDED FOR FULL SYSTEM
ACCESS.
```

Believe what it says! Until you ask for validation, you may only read messages. Once you use <V> to ask for validation you see the following:

```
AUTOMATIC ON-LINE SYSTEM VERIFICATION
<M>AIN MESSAGE AREA <B>ACKUP <Q>UIT
```

All callers are fully verified after filling out this questionnaire.

TechAlliance members will receive download Library access within 48 hours. If you are not a TechAlliance Co-op member you DO NOT receive access to the Downloads Library. Almost all the other BBS functions, including the message boards are open to ALL callers regardless of membership status.

We will gladly send membership information to all of you who are not members.

```
PRESS 1 - IF YOU ARE A TECHALLIANCE
CO-OP MEMBER
PRESS 2 - IF YOU ARE NOT A TECHALLIANCE
CO-OP MEMBER
```

Choices 1 and 2 are questionnaires necessary for automatic on-line verification. Answer those questions and you are presented with a third menu choice:

```
PRESS 3 - YOU ARE NOW VERIFIED. TIME TO
GO CHECK OUT THE SYSTEM!
```

Until you press menu choice 3 the verification process is not completed. Make sure you use menu choice 3 to return to the Main Menu after filling out the questionnaires.

A quick list of TBBS screen messages and my suggested default answers:

```
# CHARS PER LINE ON SCREEN(10-132)?          80
ENTER LETTER OF YOUR TERMINAL,
  <CR> IF NOT LISTED:                    B (OR C)
DO YOU WISH TO MODIFY THIS?                   N
CAN YOUR TERMINAL PRINT LOWER CASE?           Y
DOES YOUR TERMINAL NEED LINE FEEDS?           Y
HOW MANY NULLS (0-50, NORMALLY 0)?            0
CAN YOUR TERMINAL DISPLAY ANSI CODES?         N
CAN YOUR TERMINAL DISPLAY IBM
  GRAPHICS CHARACTERS?                        N
DO YOU WISH TO HAVE A PAUSE AFTER
  EACH DISPLAY PAGE (Y/N)?                    Y
HOW MANY LINES PER DISPLAY PAGE
  (10-80)?                                   24
```

Well, that pretty much does it. A quick and dirty guide on how to painlessly log onto the TechAlliance BBS. Remember, if you have any questions you can reach me on the BBS by leaving a message to the Sysop, or to Paul Stout. ▲

CarpalRest - Press Release

I just received the following press release in the mail from a company located very near the TechAlliance Office. It struck me as I was preparing and typing information into the computer for this newsletter, that it might be of interest to some of our members who do an excessive amount of computer work. After working all day on this newsletter, I may give the company a call myself...Editor

New Product Press Release

CarpalRest by Fox Bay Industries, Inc. is designed to provide support to the wrists, hands, and upper body of operators of computer keyboards, thereby reducing repetitive strain and fatigue. CarpalRest has a curved and padded rest surface for user comfort, and a non-skid base to hold the rest and the keyboard stable as a unit. There are designs available to adapt to any workstation, to fit any keyboard. If not, we'll customize. For more information call or write:

Fox Bay Industries, Inc.
P.O. Box 4409
Kent, WA 98032
(206) 941-9155
1-800-874-8527
FAX (206) 941-9197

The Help File...

This section of the Co-op Spirit will be dedicated to asking and answering simple, brief questions that members may have. If you have a question or an answer (please limit answers to printed questions) send it to the TechAlliance office, c/o the Co-op Spirit Editor. All answers will be mailed to the member requesting help. Brief selected answers will be printed in this section the following month.

More complex and detailed questions will be reserved for our Member-to-Member Consulting Network. We will gather network info on the renewal forms. This will insure our system's annual updating. Renewal notices will start going out soon. But enough of that, let's get back to our member that needs help. Our first question is printed below.

Mac Q: "... For the past few years, I have tried to find an inexpensive Prolog that runs on the Mac. The cheapest I've found is over $200.00, and since I have not learned the language, I don't really want to pay that price. X-Lisp has a baby Prolog, but it is much more suited for someone who is already familiar with Prolog than for someone who is a beginner. And many of the applications listed in the shopping guide are no longer for sale.

Do you know of any cheap Prologs? I have both a Mac Plus and IIsi, and can work on either platform..."

(submitted by Katherine in Baton Rouge, LA)

Our New Amiga 3000

By Peter Barnes, AMIGAlliance SIG Chairman

WE ARE HAPPY to announce that AMIGAlliance, TechAlliance's Amiga SIG, has just received a beautiful, brand-new Amiga 3000 computer (25 mHz version—the faster of the two manufactured models). We also acquired the matching Commodore-Amiga 1950, 31 mHz multiscanning RGB analog color monitor, and A-10 stereo speakers. If you or any of your friends are at all interested in the exciting Amiga experience, now would be a good time to join TechAlliance. Membership will include many opportunities to drive this state-of-the-art gem and witness monthly demonstrations of its powers.

Our new machine sports a Motorola 68030, 32-bit CPU clocked at 25 mHz; a 68882 numeric coprocessor; 2 megabytes of RAM (1 meg of chip and 1 meg of Fast); a 3-1/2-inch internal disk drive (formatted disk capacity of 880 K); and a 50 megabyte SCSI hard drive with built-in DMA SCSI controller). This is in addition to the standard Amiga multi-chip coprocessor system for DMA video, graphics and sound. The newest AmigaDOS/WorkBench 2.0 comes included on ROM chips. This is a much-improved, sleeker-looking-and-feeling operating system with a classy color scheme including trim, 3-D buttons and many more options than the earlier versions 1.3.x. (Note: the color scheme is strikingly similar to that employed by the SouthCenter branch of MacDonald's in their dining room!!).

The Amiga 3000 is a true 32-bit computer, which means that all data and memory paths are 32 bits wide both within the 68030 chip itself and along all of the internal computer buses. In contrast, the Amiga 1000 and 2000 are called 16/32-bit machines since the data paths within the Motorola 68000 CPU are 32 bits wide, but the internal buses within the computer are only 16 bits wide. Doubling the width of the data and memory pathways increases the processing speed of the machine tremendously. Also, the on-chip cache memory of the 68030 chip allows faster performance even with older, 16-bit memory chips.

There are various new features to be found in the new Amiga 3000. We will discuss some of them in the months to come. One of the most important and radical changes found in the new machine is the special video display circuitry known as the Display Enhancer. This circuitry removes flicker and visible scan lines from interlaced and noninterlaced graphics modes—a built-in version of MicroWay's FlickerFixer. It employs de-interlacing in Amiga interlaced display modes to remove flicker and visible scan lines with full overscan support, and scan-doubling in Amiga noninterlaced display modes to remove visible scan lines without motion artifacts (ghost or trailing effects produced by, for example, fast-moving animations). The Display Enhancer also supports the new enhanced chip set display modes (Productivity and Superhires) under AmigaDOS 2.0. More on this next time.

With over 2,000,000 units sold (Amiga World, March 1991, page 10), the Amiga has built itself a formidable reputation as a great computer for graphics and especially, video applications. ▲

The Art of Archiving

Question: I'm new to telecommunications. I download a few files, but none of them will run. What do those strange extensions on the filenames like .LZH and .ZOO mean? Am I suppose to do something to these files after I download them? I spent money downloading files and I can't make them work. Help!

Answer: The vast majority of files found on Bulletin Board Systems are compressed

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using one or another Amiga-based file compressor/librarian/archiver type of program. This is done for two main reasons:

1. Compressing a file makes it smaller. It takes up less space so more files can be available on line; and because it makes files smaller, it takes you less time to download files, therefore costing you less money.

2. Compressing or archiving a file lets multiple files be put into one upload, such as a program, its icon, some documentation, other support files, etc. This way you usually only have to do one download to get a complete piece of software instead of a bunch of downloads.

Now about all those different funny filename extensions. Over the few years that the Amiga has existed, file compressors have gotten better and better. The first compressors were "ports" from other computer platforms like MS-DOS. They worked okay but didn't compress very well and couldn't handle long Amiga-style filenames so you often downloaded one, decompressed it, and found an "execute.me" text file inside the archive which you had to execute from the CLI to rename all the files and/or put them in the corresponding subdirectories.

The newer bunch of Amiga file compressors work much better. They pack archives of files down smaller; they understand subdirectory structures; they're more reliable overall. So, over the years the older compressors have given way to newer and better ones, but since Amiga files on many online services go back to 1985, you'll find just about ALL kinds of compressors used so you need to know which are which.

Today's hottest file compressor could be obsolete real quickly if an even better one comes out tomorrow and proves itself to be superior. Below you'll see a typical filename extension. Following that will be an explanation of what compressor was used to make the archived file and what decompressor you should use to unpack and decompress the included files after downloading so you can use them.

Current favorites (depending on whether you plan to upload packed files or packed disk tracks) are noted below.

.ARC- these were made with ARC, one of the first "major" file compressors, ported from MS-DOS. ARC can also extract the files as can UNARC. The best way is with PKAX an .ARC file extractor (and ONLY an extractor) which is the fastest available. ARC'ed files are not that commonly found these days since there are now much better and more efficient packers.

.ZOO- these were made with ZOO. ZOO was better than ARC since it made smaller files, understood Amiga subdirectory structures and could handle long Amiga-style filenames. But in some cases, ZOOing a file actually makes it bigger instead of smaller: this often happens with HAM pictures. Unpack .ZOO files with ZOO itself. There's a little .ZOO unpacker-only called BOOZ but it doesn't always work so great so don't use it. We recommend against using ZOO to pack new uploads due to its extreme inefficiency with some types of files.

.ZIP- this file was made with PKAZIP on an Amiga or PKZIP on an MS-DOS machine. ZIP is pretty efficient and powerful and knows about long filenames and subdirectories. The main problem with ZIPped files is that, for the Amiga, only PKAZIP can unpack them and there is no CLI version of PKAZIP. You have to run PKAZIP and use its gadget-laden interface like a directory utility. Some Amiga power users have balked at the lack of a CLI command version of PKAZIP and so .ZIP files are rarer than if there were a CLI version. You might wonder why power users would shy away from a pretty interface like PKAZIP has. The reason is that you cannot call or send commands to PKAZIP from any other program. It has no AREXX interface. It has no DOS Shell interface. It's a little world unto itself and so PKWare's refusal to release a CLI version has put their program into general disfavor. Such is life.

Current Favorite File Archiver: .LZH - these were made with LHARC. LHARC is the current favorite among Amiga file compressors. It knows about subdirectories and long filenames and compresses extremely well, although a little slower than ZOO. I have NEVER seen an Amiga file YET that LHARC couldn't make smaller, even if only 1%. There are different ways to decompress .LZH files. LHARC itself works fine. Another program, LHARCA, puts an Intuition (gadgets/buttons) interface on top of LHARC's engine. A third program, LZ, can both make and undo .LZH files and is quite fast. Although LZ is not entirely bug-free when MAKING .LZH files, it seems to be very reliable at unpacking them.

.PAK - these were made with PAK. PAK files have the advantage of being self-decompressing after downloading. This means you don't need to use any other program to get the files out of a .PAK archive after downloading. Just name the archive SOMETHING.PAK on your disk and then type that name at a CLI prompt and the archive will unPAK itself. PAK doesn't compress very well and doesn't know about subdirectories but it's used now and then for "beginner" files - for instance there may be a copy of LHARC in a file library in .PAK format so people can get the latest version of LHARC even if they don't already have an older version (the old "Catch-22" scenario).

.EXE - this extension is a holdover from MS-DOS nomenclature. It means a file is executable. Just download and run it. Very few of these circulate in Amigaville but you may see them from time to time.

.TXT - this extension means a file is an ASCII TEXT file. It's not compressed in any way. You can either download it or read it online. The .TXT method is best used ONLY for very short text files.

.SIT - occasionally you may find a Macintosh file online, primarily for A-MAX owners. STUFFIT is the most popular Macintosh file compressor and if you find a .SIT file here you can either run STUFFIT or UNSTUFFIT under A-MAX, or run UNSIT under AmigaDOS to unpack the file.

.WRP - this file was compressed with a full-disk packer called WARP. Unlike ARC, ZOO, ZIP, and LHARC, WARP doesn't know about nor care about filenames or subdirectories. It deals with raw disk TRACKS only. This means you can WARP up an entire disk into one or more files and when someone downloads it, they unpack it to a formatted floppy disk and they will end up with a perfect duplicate of your disk including all the icons placed in the windows where you had them, subdirectories, and so on. To unpack .WRP files you can use either WARP itself, or a little accessory program called UNWARP. UNWARP is blazingly fast. It can unpack a WARP file and write it to a disk and do it as fast as merely formatting that disk!

.LHW - this file was compressed with a different full-disk packer called LHWARP. This program uses a more efficient form of compression encoding than WARP uses. Unfortunately, LHWARP has proven itself to be slightly buggy now and then, so it is not advisable to use it. .LHW files can only be unpacked with LHWARP itself.

Current Favorite Disk- Track Archiver: .DMS - this file was compressed with DISKMASHER. This is a very recent full-disk packer from the same folks who brought you WARP. DMS is very similar in operation to WARP, however it is superior in every way. It packs disk tracks down MUCH tighter than WARP does (but takes a little longer to do it), and it can unpack a .DMS file as fast as UNWARP can unpack a .WRP file. If you are going to upload full-disk files it is currently recommend you use DISKMASHER to prepare them.

That's about it for the Amiga file compressors. New and better methods are bound to come along in the future. Remember: if you pack your own files for uploading, use LHARC for plain files or files with subdirectories, and use DISKMASHER for full-disk uploads. ▲

(courtesy of PeopleLink's AmigaZone.)

Reliefware

By Ken Franklin

Good afternoon, and do you know where your backup is? The folks at TechAlliance asked me to tell you about Reliefware, since one of your latest disks contains my Reliefware game, MILESTONES 2000.

When I released my first Shareware game, ONE-ARM BATTLE, back in early 1990, I challenged downloaders to show their support for the Shareware concept. I was enormously pleased to receive over 30 checks in the first three months; that number has since grown to almost 100 checks from 8 countries.

Since I am a Family Practice physician in my "day gig", and I got more pleasure from writing and playing games than from getting paid, I decided to use my next games as a vehicle for helping those less fortunate than most computer users. Therefore, I coined the term Reliefware, and my next two games—PLUNDER and MILESTONES 2000—have since raised over $1000 for the homeless.

I have gotten many questions about Reliefware over the past nine months; the rest of this article will cover them.

"How much of the Reliefware fees do you keep for expenses?" Not one cent. As a matter of fact, I pay for all postage, modem costs, and blank diskettes myself.

"What has the money been used for?" About $300 of the money went to help shelter families that lost everything in the floods this past winter. The rest has gone to Project HEART (affiliated with Comic Relief), a project that trains and places homeless families as apartment managers and maintenance workers. This project has placed dozens of families in meaningful jobs and addresses since its beginning last year.

"Is Reliefware a donation?" No. My programs are not public-domain. I released them through the networks to speed distribution, and get them quickly to the program-starved GS users of the world. I am certain that there are many users out there who have never paid (just as there are for most programs); however, the response has been better than for most Shareware, which renews my faith in humanity.

"Are you releasing a new version?" Probably not. I have gotten wonderful suggestions after each game; I have tried to incorporate several of these in each succeeding program. However, I decided to concentrate on new projects, rather than re-refining old ones. However, since I'm in the military, I will probably spruce up each program and re-release it (with a new address) each time the Army moves me.

OK, that's enough self-aggrandizement. Thanks for supporting the Reliefware concept; and if you should write software in the future, feel free to copy the concept. ▲

Editors' Note:

As of the printing of this article, Dr. Ken Franklin , M.D., has been called to duty in Saudi Arabia. The staff at TechAlliance wish him a safe tour of duty and a speedy return home.

GS/OS 5.04 Is Out

System.Disk and System.Tools 5.0.4 was just released on America-On-Line. The GS/OS will run on an Apple //GS with 1.5 MB and will work with the new HyperCard GS.

Apple Introduces Hypercard for the Apple //GS

Long Beach, California – December 7, 1990: Apple Computer, Inc., introduced HyperCard //GS, a user-focused toolkit of information management software for the Apple //GS personal computer.

The new product will allow Apple //GS users to create their own custom software and personalize the way they store, explore, and present information. The announcement was made at the AppleFest Conference and Exposition and at the Long Beach Convention Center.

"We're very excited about HyperCard //GS", said Ralph Russo, director of the Apple // Business Unit at Apple. "Because our Apple // customers are extremely important to us, we look for ways to provide product enhancements that increase the value of their investment in our technology. We believe HyperCard //GS does just that."

Features and Benefits

Like the original HyperCard for the Macintosh Personal Computer, HyperCard //GS functions much like a set of index cards. Users store information in documents called stacks, which are made up of individual units called cards. Cards can ontain text, graphics, scanned images, and even sound. Buttons on the cards can be used to link cards and stacks, and much more. HyperCard //GS supports multiple media by letting users work with information in virtually any form, including text, graphics, video, sound and animation. It also takes full advantage of the advanced 16—color graphics capabilities of the Apple //GS.

To allow customers to begin immediately using the software, the program comes with a large collection of ready-to-use stacks –plus templates and card designs to help individuals create their own stacks. The program's script language, HyperTalk, provides buttons, cards, stacks and utilities such as debugging tools to facilitate creation of sophisticated programs and speed the preparation and performance of user-designed HyperCard stacks.

With HyperCard //GS, Apple //GS customers have the full functionality of Macintosh HyperCard version 1.2.5–plus specific enhancements to improve performance and take advantage of the color capabilities built into the //GS. They can also enjoy the additional benefit of accessing the many stacks that already exist for the Macintosh once developers convert them for the Apple //GS.

"Now Apple //GS users and third-party developers can enjoy the same power,

continued on page 8...

ANNUAL MEETING
Tuesday, April 2, 1991
6:30 p.m.

The meeting will be held at our office in Kent. Come and meet your new Board of Directors. There will be a treasurer's report and also a "State of the Co-op" address.

GS/OS RELEASED *...continued from page 7*

graphic tools, text editing and script abilities that Macintosh HyperCard users have had — but with the added advantage of color,: said Tom Weishaar, editor of the A2-Central and board member of the Apple II Developer Association. "With HyperCard //GS, Apple is delivering in a big way on its promise to continue supporting the installed base of Apple II customers and developers".

Configuration, Price and Availability

HyperCard //GS will be sold only as a stand-alone kit, with six program disks and three manuals. Included will be nine ready-made stacks (programs) for productivity, learning/games and inspirational/creative applications.

To use HyperCard //GS, customers will need an Apple //GS with at least 1.5 MB of RAM (2MB are recommended), system software 5.0.4 or subsequent version, one 800K disk drive and a hard disk drive or connection to a network environment. The program will be widely available through authorized Apple dealers at a suggested retail price of $99 in mid-February 1991.

For more information please contact: Sandra Bateman, Apple Computer, Inc. (408) 974-5470 ▲

(This article was reprinted from January 1991 The Peninsula Apple Core Newsletter, Editor Chris Diehl.)

TechAlliance mac

Mac Tip of the Month

Something for Nothing

By Andy Baird

If you have a Mac II-family machine and an Apple video card, you can probably get 15% more pixels for free!

Tweaking your height and width for a bigger picture may be nice, but how would you like to get more resolution from your color Mac display. Well believe it or not, a nifty shareware INIT called MaxAppleZoom can actually use capabilities Apple failed to take advantage of, and increase your display from its standard 640 x 480 to 704 x 512, a 15% increase in the number of pixels.

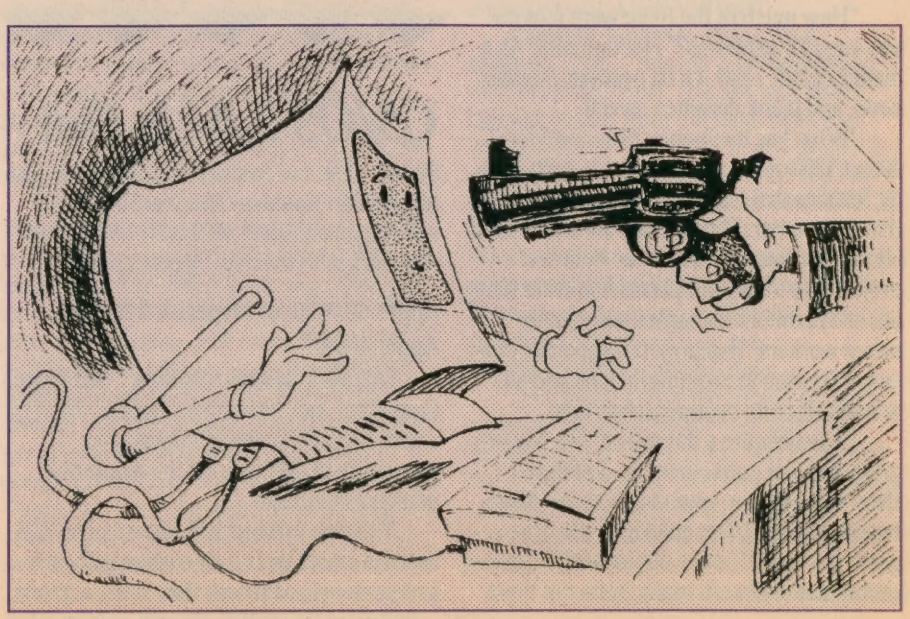
Apparently, there's extra video RAM on the standard Apple video board which is normally unused. MaxAppleZoom reprograms the board to put this to use. The extra display resolution really comes in handy, adding space for scroll bars and tool palettes around the edges of the screen, while still giving you lots of working room. Once you've tried MaxAppleZoom, you'll be instantly hooked on the more spacious display it gives you!

What's the catch? Well, it only works with certain Apple video boards; the standard 640 x 480 8-bit boards, not exotica like the 8-24GC. Other manufacturers' similar boards may or may not work. MaxAppleZoom seems to be carefully written. After using it for almost a year, I've found no INIT conflicts or glitches.

MaxAppleZoom is shareware, and is available in the PMUG software library or from America Online. Try it! ▲

(This article was reprinted from February 1991 Princeton Macintosh Users' Group Newsletter, Volume VIII, Number 2)

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Hopefully by the time you receive this newsletter MaxAppleZoom will be available on the TechAlliance BBS. If you are new to our BBS or shy away from using it because modem use is new to you, please see the article New Modem User Blues in this issue.*



Prodigy Using COM 3

By Bob Caldwell

The Graphic Environment Interface world now has another player in its field. Prodigy is a Graphic User Interface, or should be considered as one, even though you can only use the interface while using Prodigy. I am not a promoter of the product, if fact I didn't even consider using it until I realized that if I didn't sign up for my free Prodigy Start-up Kit, including all the manuals and software needed to use the service, I would have to pay for it, should I decide to try Prodigy. Well, that made the choice for me, so off in the mail went my request for the Start-up Kit, if I didn't like the service I could just cancel my subscription and be done with it, keeping the Start-up Kit (to add to my pile of useless software I guess).

I received the Kit around the first of the year and because of the Holidays, I didn't get around to installing it until the second week of January. Having installed it and tried it out I saw much better performance than in the earlier version. Using a 2400 Baud modem I had fairly fast response time when I selected items to read or look at.

The Hard Disk buffer is a must for faster system speeds (700K Hard Disk space is required). VGA and EGA displays give a much better picture but at the cost of speed, so on a slow system CGA might help.

Com port selection is the standard fare, COM 1 through COM 4, however most users will find using COM 1, the default is probably the easiest to get started. That is what I did and had no problems installing the software and running it the first time.

As a result of purchasing a new 386 LSI PC and receiving Procomm Plus version 2 a few weeks later, I started thinking about how I was going to use all three of the COM ports. Since my internal Modem was installed as COM 3, I decided to keep COM 1 and 2 free for the Cable news service (XPRESS) and my home lighting system since they only support COM ports 1 and 2.

At the time I didn't think of Prodigy as being a problem and Procomm Plus supports COM 1 through COM 8 giving me more choices than I would ever need, so I installed Procomm Plus on COM 3 and tried it out to no avail. What could be the problem ? I looked at the book (the last thing a Computerphile would admit to doing) and found that COM 3 is usually given the same interrupt as COM 1. So I checked the setting and found that my modem was set for IRQ 5, different than normal but I wasn't using IRQ 5 so that was OK, or so I thought. Installation of the BUS Mouse was another lesson in IRQ's, it supports IRQ 2 through 5, via a 4 position header- jumper arrangement. So I picked IRQ 2, which didn't seem to be a problem although it was being used by something called "Cascade" which I won't go into here. With everything installed and working I had it made. The modem was working (COM 3, IRQ 5) the BUS Mouse was working (IRQ 2) and the COM 1 and 2 ports were free for my other hardware.

Enter Prodigy and the requirements of COM 3. In reply to my message on the BBS about moving my modem back to COM 2 so I could use Prodigy Bill Cowell had said that COM 3 was available so I decided to try and use it. My original thoughts were that it was not going to be a problem, all I had to do was look in the book! Well sure enough the book said that you can use COM 3 or COM 4. So I had it made again. Just switch to COM 3 on the menu in Prodigy and off you go! Wrong!! I switched to the COM 3 port OK, but Prodigy just sat there saying I had a COMmunications problem. So what could be wrong? I decided that it must be that pesky IRQ. So back into the book, by now I'm thinking that maybe these folks who write these things aren't so irritating or insulting to us users of products after all. In the Prodigy book it tells you to look on Page 12 to find out about COM 3 and 4, so I looked. COM 3, it said must use the IRQ 4, and COM 4 must use the IRQ 3. OK, no problem I can just look in the book and find out how to change my IRQ on the modem to 4. That was easy just change a jumper to select between IRQ 2 through 5. With that done Prodigy came up like an F-16 behind a MIG-23, fast and no problems in continuing on its mission. Now I really had it made, everything I wanted working. Or so I thought. Off to the computing world I happily went.

Now with IRQ 5 free I could set my BUS Mouse to it, which I did by moving the jumper to that position on the board.

My next thing to do was call the BBS and see what was going on in the IBM, Apple and Amiga world. So run the file to call up the modem and run the script to log on to TechAlliance... what... the modem won't dial or even respond to commands. I'll bet it's that pesky IRQ again. Let's see we had COM 3 set to IRQ 4 for Prodigy to run but before that we used the modem and it was set to COM 3 IRQ 5, so what is the problem? Well maybe the IRQ for Procomm Plus is wrong? I look in the setting for Procomm Plus and it is set for IRQ 5, go to the menu and set it for IRQ 4, exit and try again and low and behold it works! Hurrah! I did it! (And I never once had to use those manuals that come with the equipment for use as paper weights to hold down notes placed around your computer so you don't have to look in the manuals because no Computerphile would admit to using a manual to find the problem with their computer, it's just not done!) ▲

WINDOWS 3.0 - What's Included

By Steve R. Cavanaugh

Editor's Note: *This article is continued from the article* ***Windows 3.0 – The Future Is Here*** *in February's newsletter.*

The new version of Windows comes with a whole host of applications and tools. I'll spend just a few words on each to try to give you the flavor of the environment.

Himem.Sys

Windows comes with a memory driver called HIMEM.SYS. Users of the old Windows will recognize this as the driver from hell. On the old Windows, to run most efficiently you needed HIMEM.SYS. The trouble is none of the rest of my software liked HIMEM.SYS, so I had to decide between efficiency in Windows, or efficiency everywhere else. That is the reason I was using QEMM 5.0 when I started this.

Under Windows 3.0, HIMEM.SYS becomes a blessing, especially in a 286 or 386 computer. On 286 and 386 computers, if you have more than 2 Megabytes of memory, and it's set up as extended memory, Windows 3.0 starts the CPU in protected mode. Protected mode allows for more than one program to be loaded into memory at a time, and you can switch between them. On 386 computers, you can actually set up multiple windows with different applications, all running at the same time. Wonderful stuff!

Program Manager

The Program Manager is a program that allows you to set up "Program Groups." A Program Group is an Icon that contains program icons within it. In actuality, Windows holds the path to an application in a .GRP file, and an Icon is associated with this file in the Program Manager window. The bottom line is that you can have all your word processors in one group, all your spreadsheets in another group, all your tools and utilities in a third group, and so on. This is a pretty handy way to organize your interface to program access. You can also tell Program Manager to associate a specific file with your program Icon, so every time you start that program the file is automatically loaded.

One thing that constantly bothers me is Program Group Icons trading places. In the Program Manager window, you can manually move Icons around, or you can have Windows automatically organize them. I like to have things my way, so I have left the "automatic" option unchecked. But every time I quit Windows, whether I select save changes or not, the next time I start Windows the Program Group Icons are all rearranged. This wouldn't bother me so much if there was some kind of structure to the organization, but it seems completely random.

File Manager

File Manager is the replacement for the hated MS-DOS EXECUTIVE. It's a program that roughly resembles several other DOS based programs that show the structure of your subdirectories. But File Manager has some other tricks up its sleeve. Each subdirectory is represented by a file-folder icon followed by the subdirectory name. If the subdirectory has a subdirectory in it, the file-folder has a "plus" sign in it. A single click on a file-folder with a plus sign expands the next level of subdirectory. A double click on any file-folder opens a window with that subdirectory's contents displayed. Subdirectory windows can have the files displayed by type, size, etc. just like MS-DOS EXECUTIVE. But with File Manager, you can select a file with the mouse and drag it to a different directory or disk, just like the Macintosh operating system. This can be very handy, and it can be very kludgy. For example, if you want to delete all of the files in a subdirectory, you can either select the file-folder and use the File Delete command, or open the file-folder, use File Select All, and then use File Delete. Use the first method: When you delete files in a subdirectory window, Windows insists on redrawing all of the filenames after each file is deleted. Large sets of files take considerable time to delete.

Print Manager

Print Manager is the utility that takes the place of the old print spooler.

Control Panel

The Control Panel is one of the more flashy improvements in Windows 3.0. It includes several new utilities to personalize your working environment.

Desktop Editor

The Desktop editor is a utility that allows you to select different backgrounds, and overlay pictures on the desktop. The background editor lets you select from provided background patterns, or to create your own. Users of the Macintosh will immediately recognize the similarity to the Mac Control Panel desktop editor: You create a pattern in an edit window that is repeated all over the desktop.

In addition to the Desktop editor, the Control Panel let's you select what is called Wallpaper from a list of about six or seven files. Wallpaper is a bitmap image using .BMP as an extension. You use the supplied .BMP files, or you can create your own using Windows Paintbrush. Wallpaper overlays the desktop, and can be any 16 color

image, up to 640 X 480. At least that seems to be all I could get to work, and the manual is void of any useful information concerning this topic.

Color Editor

The Color editor, like the Desktop editor, allows you to select your environment colors from a list of files, or create your own. Microsoft has thoughtfully provided some very nice color combinations. It is possible to create some truly awful colors for your screen, so I appreciate being able to use ones that appear as though some thought went into them. The Color editor has a sample display in it, and as you select each file in the file selection window, the sample changes to show you what it looks like.

If you insist on having it your way though, you can. In the Color editor window there is a button to expand the window. The expanded half has boxes filled with colors to select from, and an identifier bar at the top. On the left side of the window, you point and click on the element you wish to modify, and the name of that element appears in the identifier bar. Then you click on the color you want, and the sample on the left side of the window changes to the one you selected. Nifty.

Font Utility

The Font utility works pretty much like the old one. If you're smart, you'll get yourself a postscript laser printer, or one with a Postscript cartridge, and forgo a bunch of grief. I can't understand why Microsoft can't make all their fonts work in all sizes in both portrait and landscape modes. I also don't understand why nothing about font management is intuitive on this system. For example, Windows 3.0 comes with about seven fonts. When I run a Windows program however, some of the fonts that come with Windows don't show up in the font menu. There's probably a good reason, but I've never taken the time to discover it.

Port Utility

Finally Windows supports more than just COM1 and COM2! Now you can have COM3 and COM4 too. The Port utility let's you set up each of the four ports to your desired parameters.

Mouse Utility

The Mouse utility lets you set up mouse tracking speed and double-click speed.

Printer Installer

The Printer installer is the program you use to install and set up a new printer.

Keyboard Utility

This utility lets you set the repeat rate.

Date/Time Editor

The Date/Time editor let's you set the system clock.

Sound Utility

Here's one I laughed over. The Sound utility let's you shut off the system beep. That's it. I hope Microsoft has built in some support for plug-in sound cards here, but if that's the idea, I haven't heard.

International Utility

The International utility let's you set system characteristics for currency symbols, decimal places, number format, etc.

386 Enhanced Mode Utility

The 386 Enhanced mode utility lets you set one parameter when you are running in 386 Enhanced mode. Presently I am not, and the purpose of this utility escapes me.

Clipboard

The Clipboard is supposed to work like the old one. Mostly, I think it does, but I couldn't for the life of me get a chart I created in Excel and copied to the clipboard to paste into Windows Paintbrush. I guess the format must not have been correct or something, but I wish it worked like the Mac: Anything in the Mac clipboard is quickdraw based and can be pasted in any Mac application that supports graphics (and most do).

DOS PROMPT

Windows comes with a Program Icon named DOS PROMPT. If you examine the properties of the DOS PROMPT Icon, you will find that it points to a program called COMMAND.COM. Since I like and use 4Dos, I reset DOS PROMPT to point to 4Dos.com.

Windows Setup

Windows Setup is the program that is supposed to be able to automatically search all of your drives, find all of the programs, and create Program Group Icons for you. I ran this once, and it found WordPerfect and Dbase III+, but that's all. I can't understand that because I have hundreds of programs on my hard drive. Again, it's just as well for me, since I want to have control of this function anyway.

PIF Editor

The PIF editor is a new version of the old PIF editor. This version gives you much more control over how programs start, and what they do in the environment. In 386 Enhanced Mode, you can specify in the PIF for each program if you want it to open full screen or in a window. There are memory options, too.

Recorder

The Recorder is a macro utility. Although I used it to see if it works, I haven't used it in practice yet. It comes with a record and play mode so you can just mouse your way around and it will record all of your activities into a file which can be edited.

Notepad

Notepad is a plain text editor. Simple and elegant.

Calculator

The new Calculator utility includes two calculators: A plain one and a scientific one. I was disappointed that the scientific did not have "reverse polish" notation, but it does have other base systems.

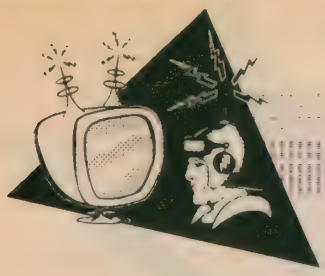
Calendar

The calendar is a typical scheduler type utility that includes alarms. Adequate, but not spectacular.

Cardfile

The Cardfile seems unchanged.

continued on page 12



WNDOWS 3.0...cont. from page 11

Clock
This is unchanged from the old Windows.

Paintbrush
Windows Paintbrush is the bitmap program that comes with Windows 3.0. Paintbrush imports .BMP, .MSP, and .PCX files. Since the Control Panel lets you set up Wallpaper using .BMP files, Paintbrush is the tool you need if you want to create your own Wallpaper. I like the Wallpaper idea, and I have a lot of .GIF files, so I set out to try to convert some to .BMP format.

Using VPIC version 2.7, I viewed the .GIF files of interest. While viewing them using VPIC, if you hit the Z key, VPIC will convert and save a .PCX file. Then you import that file into Paintbrush using the File Open menu and selecting Options>> when the dialog box comes up. You select .PCX and then using File Save As.... you select the .BMP option. That's it! One thing puzzles me about Paintbrush: Although the Save As.... menu selection indicates that you can save as a 256 color bitmap, you cannot open a .PCX file that has more than 16 colors. In fact, several times while trying to open 32 color and 256 color files, I got a message that said there had been an unrecoverable program error and Paintbrush quit. Odd.

Write
Write seems unchanged, although I admit I don't use it: I like WinWord.

Terminal
Terminal is the Windows 3.0 communications program. It can be used to dial up a remote system and communicate with it, but this is an entry level utility, not a full blown terminal program.

Reversi
This is the same Reversi from the previous version of Windows.

Solitaire
The Solitaire game is very nice. I can't get my wife away from it! You can select between two different scoring methods, and about 8 different card backs.

DayBook
DayBook is an application written under ToolBook. ToolBook is a Hypercard-like product from Asymetrix. DayBook is a basic scheduler application that let's you have a list of things to do linked to a daily scheduler, that's linked to a monthly scheduler, etc. I guess it's pretty nifty, but it runs slow even on my 386, so I don't use it.

COMPATIBILITY
For the most part, Windows 3.0 seems well tested and stable. I have had it crash on several occasions, but I confess I have yet to study the "Optimizing Windows" section in the manual. During one crash, I was printing a WinWord document, using Reflections to communicate on COM1, and moving a file to the A: drive using File Manager. All at once. I guess I was asking for it, but isn't that what multitasking is supposed to be all about? I guess I'll have to go back and examine the PIF files for each of those programs and try to configure them so they won't collide (if, in fact, I can). Word to the wise however: Save your files often if you decide to multitask with Windows 3.0.

OVERALL IMPRESSION
I like Windows 3.0. I use it. It does many of the things I always wanted Windows to do. But it still needs work. I like the direction that Windows is taking, and I hope for further improvement. I wonder when Windows 4.0 will be out? ▲

Bits and Bytes

By Bill Cowell

PC GEOS

Otherwise known as GeoWorks Ensemble. This is the graphical user interface that Windows 3.0 should have been. I saw GeoWorks demo'ed at Comdex in November and was impressed enough to jump at the chance to try it out. I am very impressed. I add my vote of approval to those made by reviewers in recent issues of PC Mag, InfoWorld, PC Computing, and PC World. In a nutshell it is a fast (written in machine language), extremely capable memory manager and excellent user interface. It will run on an XT (try that with Windows) with no problem. If you make it to the March SIG meeting you will see how it looks on a Toshiba 8088 laptop. Its almost a shame to show it on a monochrome monitor, since it graphics are so outstanding even on an EGA color monitor.

If you are still using a CGA monitor you will be limited to a black and white display, however. It has all the utilities that Windows has; i.e. a calculator, a calendar and scheduler, a paint program, a word processor and even a version of the solitaire game similar to that included with Windows. The memory management capability is where it really makes Windows look archaic. I originally used it on a machine with only 1 megabyte of RAM. I was able to pop in and out of it into such DOS memory hogs as Ventura and Prodigy without a problem. Try that with Windows and only 1 meg of memory. There are only two negatives that I have found. First they have made a mistake in pricing it at $199. If they had priced it at $149 or less they could have really given Windows a run for it. Borland proved that approach by marketing their "Competitive Upgrade" version of Quattro Pro for less than $100. The result is Quattro is now the leading spreadsheet. The other problem that GEOS has to deal with is the availability of other programs specifically tailored to run under GEOS. There is some indication that this is to be worked, but only time will tell how effective they will be.

TAXES

The last month or so, I have reviewed tax software from TimeWorks (SwiftTax) and from DAC (Sylvia Porter's Rapid Tax).

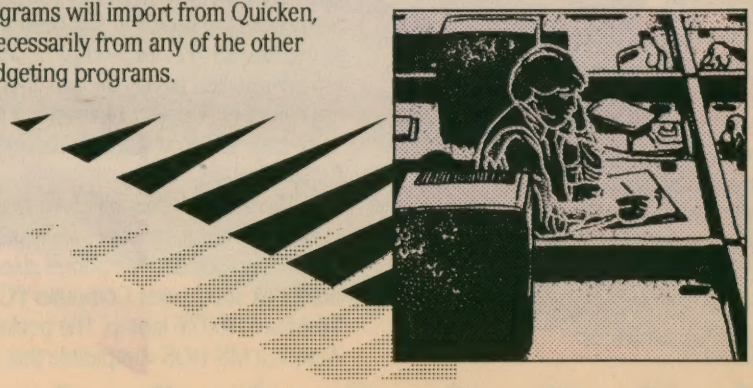
Another new kid on the block is Personal Tax Preparer from Parsons Technology. All these tax programs take a similar approach to assisting you in completing your income tax forms. They use an "interview" technique to aid you in determining what tax related data you need and which tax forms are required. You then fill out the required forms. If you fail to include all the required data you are alerted to the requirement before you can proceed. On-line help is available to give you additional information on a particular form. Most of the help information comes directly from IRS tax publication 17. All the packages include all the tax forms that almost everyone will require. For instances there are 90 forms included in the Parsons Tech software package. The completed forms can be printed in a format that is acceptable to the IRS. All the packages include such additional aids as a pop-up calculator and note pads. Its hard to beat the old standby, TurboTax, but all these packages appear to come close. They certainly should be more than adequate for all except for the most complex return. I would favor the Parson's package on the basis that it appears to be quite complete and it is the least expensive of the lot. It also has the advantage of being able to import data from either Money Counts, Dollars and Sense, Managing Your Money or Quicken. The other programs will import from Quicken, but not necessarily from any of the other home budgeting programs.

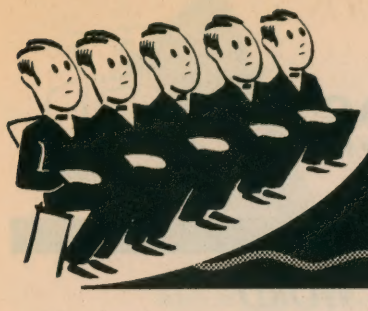
LAST WORD

DOS 5.0 may be out this month or in April, although there is some indication that this may slide some more. Advance reports have been good. I just hope the memory management is as good as GEOS. Its suppose to be similar to Quarterdeck's. It will include a graphical shell similar to Windows. Instead of GW Basic they will include a version of QuickBasic. Even Edlin will be replaced by a really useful full screen ASCII editor. The system will support a 2.8 megabyte floppy drive when and if they become readily available.

Watch for Multimedia to become the hot new fad. It is rapidly becoming more affordable. New Media Graphics Corp. has released Super VideoWindows, a video/audio board for PC systems. It will allow you to play full-motion video and stereo audio from a TV camera, VCR, or cable TV in any size window on your monitor. The program supports saving individual frames on disk, or you can port them to other applications.

If you haven't been confused by all the computer chip options, you sure will be by the end of this year. Intel will release two or three variations of the 486 chip. One version will have the coprocessor disabled. This version will be about half the price of the current 486 chip. Watch for a low cost 486 from IBM. Intel also getting ready to release the samples of the 586 chip. It will be a 64 bit chip with a clock speed of 66 MHz, making it four times as fast as the current 486/33. ▲





Meeting Briefs

AMIGAlliance SIG

January 9, 1991

Since our scheduled speaker didn't show up, January's meeting got off to a shaky start. But local members Rich O'Brien and Michael Cline jumped in and saved the evening. Rich showed us how to play the fast action-filled space arcade game "Xenon II". With his "Hot-Shot" (I think!) trackball like joystick with continuous fire mode, Rich really racked up the points earned by killing everything in sight that moves. The waves of elaborate alien spaceships run in looping, winding and spiralling paths coming at you from all directions. And the outer space monsters are drawn in a truly beautiful style with many stunning colors. Normally a quite difficult game, using a joystick with continuous fire mode (or a regular joystick with a continuous fire adapter) makes reaching those higher levels a snap (relatively!).

Our second act of the evening was Michael Cline and his head-stretching/ head-squashing demonstration of some of the finer points and features of Electronic Arts' Deluxe Paint III. Michael lay down with his head on a pillow and digitized his face with the "Digi-View" video digitizer. He then imported this shades-of-gray image into the paint program and proceeded to overlay progressively smaller copies of the face on top of one another. It looked pretty bizarre!

Other topics covered were many of the details and finer points of color cycling; some very nice animation effects can be created very, very simply but with dramatic results. Then there was the stretching and shrinking of body parts.

All in all, I would say that it was a successful meeting once again. Please join us on the second Wednesday of each month at AMIGAlliance, yet another service of TechAlliance.

APPLE // FAMILY

February 5,1991

Toby Allard showed us how to make the Apple // really sing. He demonstrated several of the latest MIDI interface devices and programs to everyone's pleasure. So the offices in the R&B Complex in Kent, Washington were given their first ever computer concert. Not one complaint was issued that the music was too loud. It was night enjoyed by all.

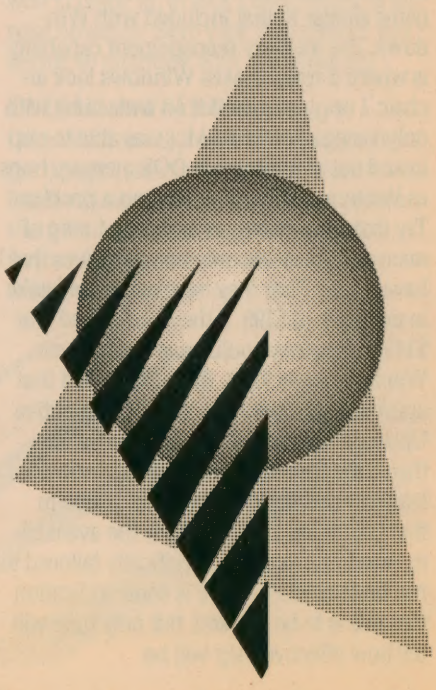
MS-DOS SIG

January 23, 1991

January was show-it-off night. We are talking about all those fabulous computer related gifts that you received for Christmas. Gerry Drake brought in his new Desk Jet Printer and did some printing demonstrations for us both in the area of graphics and text. With the advent of newer and faster laser printers, the Hewlett Packard DeskJet can be purchased at phenomenally low prices.

Bill Cowell, of Cowell Computers, brought in the latest release of Quicken, the leading home/small business budgeting and check book management program. Version 4 of Quicken adds investment management to its outstanding checkbook management capabilities. One of the strong features of the program has been the ability to use filters to review and print out reports on any selected payee, memo, or accounting category. Version 4 has added the ability to save these customized report formats for future use.

Three completely different examples of portable computers where shown by members. They included the pocket sized Atari, a notebook sized Laser Computer PC-3, and a Toshiba T1000XE laptop. The pocket sized Atari is a MS-DOS compatible that is ideal for two finger note taking and small spread sheet and calculator usage. The Laser PC-3 has a full sized keyboard that would be ideal for field note taking, with the exception of a rather limited screen size. It also has a calculator, address book, spelling checker, etc., functions built into it. It gets about a hundred hours life out of ordinary AA batteries. The cost is just a little over $100. A later model, the PC-4, has a screen twice as big and includes such things as an AC adapter that are extra cost options with the PC-3. The PC-4 costs about $100 more than the PC-3. The Toshiba T1000XE is the new hard drive model of Toshiba's popular XT model laptops. With a weight of about 6 pounds, it is an ideal travel companion for someone that wants a full featured MS-DOS machine to take on the road. Its back lit screen is probably the best available on any laptop computer. Street price is about $1700. ▲



March 1991 Special Interest Group Meeting Information

AMIGALLIANCE

This month's meeting is still being planned at press time. We're trying to think of ways to really show off our new Amiga system. Join us. You'll be glad you did.

AMIGA NEW USER ORIENTATION CLASSES - Two sessions have been set aside each month. But you MUST call the office to make an appointment for a particular class. If there are people signed up classes will be held. The first session is held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. This shorter session will end in time for us to be part of the AMIGAlliance meeting. The second session will be held on the third Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m. This session will tend to run longer ending at about noon.

APPLE // FAMILY

The Apple // SIG will tentatively have a continuation of the Time Out Series Demonstrations. We began these at a previous meeting, but ran out of time. Our original plan to have Ken Franklin, Reliefware author, come and demonstrate his games has been changed due to his participation in Dessert Storm. He will be on his way to Saudi Arabia as of the writing of this newsletter. Please keep him in your thoughts and pray for a quick end to this war.

NOTE: *Don't forget to come to Jim Morrison's beginners class for Apple // owners from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.*

MACINTOSH

The March meeting will be a general interest topic, plus a planning meeting. We need your input. Come and tell us what topics you would like to know more about. We would also like to here about topics you would like to present. We're looking for help in a couple of areas. We need some of you to help with meeting set-up and with the public domain and shareware library. If everyone does a little the whole group will benefit. Give it a try!

MAC HELP - Mac Help is 45 minutes of help and question answering on the basics of the Macintosh. Mac Help starts at 6:45 p.m. and is offered every month at the same time.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE & SHAREWARE - Our extensive library of software will be available at this meeting. We have the cheapest price in town at just $3.00 per 800k disk. Come ready to order!!!

FREE ACCESS TO THE TECHALLIANCE BBS - Receive 2 free weeks with full access on the nationally renowned TechAlliance Bulletin Board, just for coming in and attending the meeting.

MS-DOS

This month Bill Cowell, of Cowell Computers, will give us a chance to see PC GEOS (GeoWorks Ensemble). It was reviewed recently in *PC Magazine, InfoWorld, PC Computing,* and *PC World* and received their stamp of approval. It is a fast and extremely efficient memory manager which can also run on an XT without a problem.

In addition, we will be handing out two weeks free time with full download privileges on our BBS for those new to telecommunications. Paul Stout, the BBS SYSOP, will be there to hand out instruction sheets for your first log-on and answer any questions you might have regarding the TechAlliance BBS.

If there are any beginner's out there, be sure to come for our Beginner's Corner from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. for some demos and hands-on practice.

Hope to see you all at the Meeting!

MAC PROGRAMMERS SIG

We will have our usual round table discussion of programming issues and topics, breaking up into smaller groups if the need arises. ▲

1991 ELECTION

Nominations for director positions on the TechAlliance Board of Directors closed February 15, 1991. Ballots will be mailed to you on March 1, 1991. Please take the time to read the ballot and return it by the deadline. It must be received in TechAlliance offices by that date in order to be counted on March 25, 1991. Your participation in this election is of vital importance! Please take the time to vote!

NOTE: If your membership has lapsed and you have not renewed before February 22, 1991, you will not receive a ballot for the 1991 Election.

Look for the Election results in April's newsletter. Until then...

TechAlliance Application for Membership or Renewal

Yes! Sign me up for one year's membership in TechAlliance for $25.
(International memberships are $35.)

Name _____ Daytime Phone _____

Address _____ Home Phone _____

_____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

☐ Check Enclosed ☐ New Membership

☐ Charge my bank card (VISA or MasterCard) ☐ Renewal

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

March Meeting Schedule

***Advance sign-up required for these meetings.*

Tues., March 5th:	//GS Beginners Session - 7:00 p.m. //GS (& // Family) SIG - 7:30 p.m.
Tues., March 12th:	Mac Help Session - 6:45 p.m. Mac SIG meeting - 7:30 p.m.
Wed., March 13th:	Amiga New User Class - 6:30 p.m.** AMIGAlliance - 7:30 p.m.
Sat., March 16th:	Amiga New User Class - 10:00 a.m.**
Tues., March 19th:	Voluntary Advisory Comm. 7:00 p.m.
Wed., March 20th:	Mac Programmers SIG - 7:00 p.m.
Tues., March 26th:	MS-DOS Beginner's Corner - 6:30 p.m. MS-DOS SIG meeting - 7:00 p.m.

Tues., April 2nd:	Annual Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
	//GS Beginners Session - 7:00 p.m.
	//GS (& // Family) SIG - 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Location:	All meetings are held at the office unless otherwise specified.

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